

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 043671
ORIGIN SS-25

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APPROVED BY NEA - MR. DAY

S/S: RPERITO

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 043671

STADIS////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN JEWS

REF: DAMASCUS 939, 306

1. WE PROVIDED REPRESENTATIVE SOLARZ IN CONFIDENCE SUB-
1. WE PROVIDED REPRESENTATIVE SOLARZ IN CONFIDENCE SUB-
STANCE OF YOUR ANSWERS CONTAINED DAMASCUS 939, INCLUDING
YOUR CAVEATS AND CAUTIONARY COMMENTS. WE AGREE THAT
REPRESENTATIVE SOLARZ IS WAY OUT IN FRONT OF THE JEWISH
COMMUNITY IN DAMASCUS IN TRYING TO GET THINGS MOVING;
HOWEVER, WE ARE ALSO HOPING THAT RABBI HECHT AND HIS GROUP,
WHO WILL BE VISITING DAMASCUS SHORTLY, WILL BE ABLE TO
DEVELOP AND CARRY OUT A CAREFUL STRATEGY THAT WILL NOT
DAMAGE THE INTERESTS OF THE SYRIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY. IN
THE MEANTIME, SOLARZ HAS ASKED FOR SOME FURTHER SPECIFICS
ON WHICH WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR GUIDANCE BEFORE REPLY-

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ING:

A) IF A U. S. CITIZEN WERE PREPARED TO MARRY A SYRIAN JEW-
ISH MAIDEN, WHAT KIND OF EVIDENCE OF INTEREST WOULD BE
REQUIRED BY THE SYRIAN AUTHORITIES? AN AFFIDAVIT FROM THE
MAN HIMSELF, FOR EXAMPLE, OR SOME KIND OF WRITTEN STATEMENT
MADE BY HIS RABBI? OR IS IT STRICTLY UP TO THE GIRL TO

MAKE HER CASE WITH THE SYRIAN AUTHORITIES? IN THIS CONNECTION, PARA 3 (B) OF DAMASCUS 306 IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR TO US. SHOEFI INDICATED THAT A SYRIAN JEWISH MAIDEN COULD APPLY TO MARRY A DESIGNATED FOREIGNER. IF APPROVAL WERE GRANTED, SHE PRESUMABLY WOULD RECEIVE A PASSPORT TO LIVE ABROAD WITH HER SPOUSE WITHOUT POSTING A BOND. WOULD SHE, HOWEVER, HAVE TO MARRY THAT DESIGNATED FOREIGNER IN SYRIA, OR COULD SHE TRAVEL ABROAD TO DO SO, AND THEN REGISTER HER MARRIAGE BY MAIL OR THROUGH HER FAMILY?

B) IS IT TRUE THAT A U. S. MALE CITIZEN COULD THEORETICALLY TRAVEL TO SYRIA, MEET A JEWISH MAIDEN, MARRY HER AND REGISTER THAT MARRIAGE IN DAMASCUS UNDER SYRIAN LAW,

AND DEPART WITH HIS NEW WIFE?

C) WE INTEND TO POINT OUT THAT THERE IS A FIANCEE PETITION UNDER U. S. LAW. ASSUMING THAT THE BONA FIDES OF A U.S. PETITIONER SATISFY THE INS, WOULD MAKING KNOWN SUCH A PETITION TO THE SYRIAN AUTHORITIES CONSTITUTE SOME HELP? PETITION TO THE SYRIAN AUTHORITIES CONSTITUTE SOME HELP?

D) IF AMERICAN CITIZENS WENT TO SYRIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH POTENTIALLY MARRIAGEABLE JEWISH MAIDENS, IS THERE ANY PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENT OR COMMUNITY CUSTOM THAT COULD HELP OVERCOME LANGUAGE BARRIERS OR OTHER DIFFERENCES?

E) COULD REIMBURSEMENT FOR BONDS THAT HAVE TO BE FOR-
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FEITED BE PAID WITHOUT THE FUNDS FROM AMERICAN DONORS BEING PHYSICALLY PRESENT IN SYRIA IN ADVANCE? IN OTHER WORDS, COULD ARRANGEMENTS BE MADE WHEREBY THE VARIOUS COMMUNITY COUNCILS COULD TAKE ON GOOD FAITH PROMISES FROM THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY THAT ANY BONDS SO FORFEITED WOULD BE REIMBURSED WITHIN A STATED PERIOD OF, SAY, 60 DAYS?

2. WE RECOGNIZE THAT MANY OF THESE QUESTIONS CAN BEST BE ASKED DIRECTLY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY BY INTERESTED PRIVATE VISITORS FROM THE U.S., AND WE SUGGESTED THIS TO SOLARZ. MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, WE WOULD LIKE TO GIVE HIM WHAT INFORMATION WE CAN.

3. WE EXPECT TO ANSWER YOUR 1294 SHORTLY.
VANCE

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